

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus and method for enhancing the infrastructure of a network such as the Internet is disclosed. A packet interceptor/processor apparatus is coupled with the network so as to be able to intercept and process packets flowing over the network. Further, the apparatus provides external connectivity to other devices that wish to intercept packets as well. The apparatus applies one or more rules to the intercepted packets which execute one or more functions on a dynamically specified portion of the packet and take one or more actions with the packets. The apparatus is capable of analyzing any portion of the packet including the header and payload. Actions include releasing the packet unmodified, deleting the packet, modifying the packet, logging/storing information about the packet or forwarding the packet to an external device for subsequent processing. Further, the rules may be dynamically modified by the external devices.